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The westing game novel unit pdf

Jessica is here with you today to talk all about my westing game lesson plans! Every year when I ask my students what the best assignment or unit was in the literature class, most of them identify our new unit for Ellen Raskin's Westing Game as their favorite!! It makes my heart teacher happy to hear because it's my favorite, too! So, in today's post, I'm going to outline all my Westing Game Lesson plans - and I mean, I'm going to get you through exactly what I'm doing with this novel... about the case if you're looking for a way to upgrade your Westing Game unit or want to add it to the curriculum. So here we go... My Complete The Westing Game Lesson Plans With even before we start reading, I try to amplify the excitement about reading a novel/increasing student redemption by telling students that since we'll be reading the mystery book, we'll be forming detective agencies to help solve the numerous mysteries in the plot. Trust me. High school kids love it! As we read the book, we'll focus on four basic mysteries for students to solve: Some of the resources I use to teach The Westing Game. The secrets that took Sam Westing's life? Which characters are robber, bookmaker, bomber and bug? What messages do character prompts reveal? Which character experiences the most significant changes as a result of playing Westing? The Case Books On the day we start the novel, I put students in groups and let them come up with a name for their detective agency. I provide each of them with a thematic book so they can organize their notes as they work to solve the aforementioned mysteries. Since this is such a complicated novel, I include several graphic organizers in my book of affairs. Case Books includes so much great content to help students stay engaged – plus it helps them keep track of everything important as we read! What's included in Case Books: Mystery #1 For Mystery #1 (which took Westing's life), I provide students with a tracker tip. Anytime students come across something that is mysterious or it seems like it might have something to do with Sam Westing's death, they write it in their tracker. For example, students often record: There is no person like Barney Northrup because she immediately sends a red flag when they read this. I have them jot down the page number for any question they record. At the end of the novel, we return and determine what clues were actually useful information to solve the mystery, and which were just red over-ends. Figuring out who took Sam Westing's life is such a central part of the whole novel that if students don't comprehend the main plot, they will have trouble deciphering the nuances of each chapter. So, I also include questions about understanding each chapter to help students remember significant plot points. I give them only a chapter or two of questions in time since I don't want to reveal anything important if students skim forward to look at future issues (I did it when I first started teaching the novel!). Because there are 30 chapters in the novel, if I had forced students to write out their answers to questions of understanding for each chapter, they would quickly get bored. One week they're writing out questions, using evidence from the text to support their answers, next week we're making a quick opinion, couple, share, next week, we're doing a mini-socratic workshop, next week, small groups each present answering a question or two, and the rest of the class taking notes. I honestly believe that my students don't understand how awesome this novel is and all the hidden layers of Ellen Raskin are included if they don't use these questions of understanding! Sample key tracker and proof tracker I provide for my students. Mystery #2 For #2 (secret identities of characters), I give students an Instagram Character Tracker. Since there are sixteen protagonists in the novel, students have something to watch out for. The Instagram Character Tracker allows them to draw a visual character, use images to show important qualities shown by characters, and come up with clever hashtags to help differentiate among characters. I usually spend about 5-10 minutes at the end of each lesson period, allowing students to write and draw in their character trackers, and that makes such a huge difference to their comprehension of the novel. Instagram Character Tracker is always a favorite student, and it really helps students let characters know more deeply and meaningfully! Mystery #3 For Mystery #3 (message hints reveal), I do two things, but only one is included in the to-do book: First, starting with Chapter 8, when the characters in the novel get their clues, I pass on hard copies of the clues to my students. I go one step further and form small groups to fit the couples in history. For example, one group of children will represent Angela and Ciedel and receive clues from these characters, while another group will introduce Theo and Chris and receive their clues. Some Westing Game hints – I always create a simple bulletin board, and we add hints when we go through a novel together. I give them lesson time to try to decipher their clues, and they share their findings with the class. It's always hilarious as clues make absolutely no sense on their own, but students always come up with really clever opportunities and are adamant that they are on their way to unravelling the mystery! After each group of shares, I take all the hints and put them on the bulletin board or board for the rest of the novel block. I love that students can refer to them as they develop new theories about the novel. This year, my students were like little lawyers, getting up in front of the room every day and giving closing arguments to their case when they thought they had solved something big. The clues on the board helped them add depth to their arguments. the second resource I provide to my students for mystery #3 the lyrics of the song America is beautiful (I include this in student to-do books). But, I only put them in the case of the book, once my class find out that all the clues combined make up the lyrics of the song! (When I feel like they're getting close to this big opening, I make sure the song is ready to play. Students emphasize all the clues on their lyrical handout that fit the clues on the board. We discuss how Sam Westing will be acting: It's not what you have, but what you don't have that matters. Students always think they've unraveled the mystery at the moment, but after hearing this reminder, they're worried again that really, they're just scratching the surface, and they still don't know exactly what the clues point to. It's always one of their favorite unit days. Every year I have students literally jumping up and down and fiddle with excitement when they start putting all the clues together!) An American beautiful resource that helps students keep track of clues. Mystery #4 For mystery #4 (which character is undergoing the most significant changes as a result of the game?) I provide several different graphic organizers. I know it's not really a mystery, but students are still trying to figure something out and justify it with evidence, so the link works! Before the novel, I inform students about our important question: Which character is experiencing the most significant changes as a result of the game? They will write an answer to literature (many paragraphs, proof essays) at the conclusion of a new block that answers this question, so they will look for clues as they read. Giving students their essay question WAY in advance takes a lot of pressure off, since there is no element of surprise. While we occasionally refer to an important issue during class discussions, it really won't take center stage until we finish the book. I then distribute the tracker evidence to the students and split them into small groups (depending on which character they think has changed the most) to search for evidence from the novel to support their theory. This testimony and rationale becomes a crunch of their final essay (body paragraphs!). I also give students a sample of Answer to Literature (RTL) to model their essay after (I do so with all the literary analysis tasks), which has been a game changer in terms of getting more quality work from them. When they write their essay, we use the RTL graphic organizer to make sure that the evidence and justifications are included in the logical and organized order. You can read more about how I teach literary analysis to my students on this blog. Sample teacher response to I provide for my students. Other things – Extra The Westing Game Lesson Plans Ideas The Westing Game contains a lot of top-level vocabulary, and it's a great opportunity to encourage students to start using those words. When I teach this novel, I differentiate the practice of vocabulary for students depending on how much support they need. I use graphic dictionary organizers (which I include in to-do books), anchor charts, vocabulary skits, and vocabulary matching and sentence games on spellingcity.com (my school has an account). I also give students a vocabulary test (along with questions of understanding) every few chapters so students grapple with the material. For my top-level students, I often require the use of a word or two dictionaries in their written answers, especially their definitive response to literature. Our graphic organizer of vocabulary. An example of one of the vocabulary quizzes I give my students. There is also a movie version of The Westing Game that is absolutely horrible, but I always show it to my students at the end of the block. We all come to school dressed as characters from the novel (the year I got married, I came as Angela, in a modified wedding dress!) is a costume contest, and watching a movie enjoying some popcorn. We also spend one class of period playing the board game Clue. Pupils who have a game at home bring it to school and we break into small groups for some friendly competitions. The game perfectly connects with the novel! I love that this unit has students so involved that they are asked to stay in recess and keep reading or working on their key trackers. If you are teaching a novel in your classroom or are interested in it, you can access all the activities mentioned above PLUS bonus content that can be used with any novel clicking here! It's an accurate resource that I use with my own students and I put in tons of work to make sure everything I need is included... from examples of essays to answer the keys to all quizzes and understanding questions for all the elements needed for clue tracker message boards. Enjoy! Enjoy!

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